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US Department of the Interior News Briefing



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## DOI In The News

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### **Trump To Hear Recommendations For National Monuments.**

[The Hill](#) (8/23, Cama) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke faces a Thursday deadline "to issue recommendations to the White House for any changes he thinks President Trump should make" to 21 national monument designations. The announcement will "close a chapter on the administration's highly contentious review that has fueled significant opposition among conservationists and support by Republicans and industries like oil and agriculture that use federal land." The article notes that "Zinke invited comments from the public on the review, the first time such a formal process has been taken for national monuments," and "he also traveled to many of the monuments and met with opponents and supporters."

Meanwhile, the [AP](#) (8/23, McCOMBS) reports that "conservation and tribal groups are airing TV ads, sending letters to President Donald Trump and creating parody websites in a last-minute blitz to stop Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke from downsizing or eliminating national monument areas that cover large swaths of land and water from Maine to California." The AP says that "groups that want to see the areas reduced have been less vociferous, pleading their cases on social media and working behind the scenes to lobby federal officials."

Also reporting are the [AP](#) (8/24), the [New York Times](#) (8/24, Turkewitz, Friedman), the [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (8/23), the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (8/23, Coleman), the [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (8/23, Brean), the [Arizona Republic](#) (8/23, Devoid), [KSBW-TV Monterey \(CA\)](#) Monterey, CA (8/23), [KSTU-TV Salt Lake City](#) Salt Lake City (8/23, Edwards), [WMEA-FM Portland \(ME\)](#) Portland, ME (8/23, Sharon), and [KCRA-TV Sacramento \(CA\)](#) Sacramento, CA (8/23).

**Breathtaking Utah Monuments To Test Trump, Antiquities Act.** The [Washington Times](#) (8/23, Wolfgang) reports that the Trump Administration is "considering pairing down" the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah "in what environmentalists, Western land advocates and energy industry leaders agree is a key test of the century-old Antiquities Act, the 1906 law that gives presidents authority to create monuments." Opponents of the designation say President Trump and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke have "a key opportunity to right a decades-old wrong that's still harming local economies in the state, greatly depressing energy development and stands as a bright reminder of just how much unchecked power presidents wield under the Antiquities Act."

In an op-ed for the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (8/24, McIntosh), Heidi McIntosh, a managing attorney and public lands expert at Earthjustice, writes that after President Clinton designated the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in 1996, "Utah politicians howled, in chorus with coal, oil and gas interests, that the monument would spell economic doom for the region." But "instead, the communities in this rugged landscape thrived." According to McIntosh, "they've grown sustainable economies and rejected the boom-and-bust fossil fuel industries that have long pillaged the West's fragile landscapes." In fact, "recreation from adventure-seekers, hikers, amateur geologists and families simply getting outdoors now funnels more than \$12 billion into Utah's economy." McIntosh argues that "stripping the Grand Staircase of its monument protections, in whole or in part, and turning it over to mining and drilling outfits would be destructive and unlawful." She concludes that "it should remain protected, not lost forever to pad the balance sheets of the fossil fuel industry for a few years."

**Review Unlikely To Spur Oil And Gas Rush.** [E&E Publishing](#) (8/23) reports that while the Department of Interior's review of 21 national monuments could create limited opportunities for oil and gas operators, it is unlikely that unlocking monument-designated land will offer widespread development. The Interior Department has not said whether fossil fuel development is a factor in assessing the monument designation, while the Western Energy Alliance said its support for the review is more about the harm future designations could cause than energy potential. However, environmental groups have raised concerns that the review is about expanding drilling opportunities. Chris Saeger, executive director of the Western Values Project, said, "It's very clear that Secretary Zinke and this administration is willing to risk just about every national monument under review that has the potential for development at the behest of the fossil fuel industry."

**With Redraw Of Bears Ears, Grand Staircase Looming, Utah State University Study Says National Monuments Are Neither Economic 'Boon Nor Bane'.** The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (8/23, Maffly) reports that a study by Utah State University economics professor Paul Jakus and his colleague

Sherzod Akhundjanov "concludes that landscape-scale monuments are 'neither a boon nor a bane.'" They "compared changes in per-capita income for Garfield and Kane with changes in Utah's other counties and four bordering counties in Arizona." The economists found "incomes rose in step with comparable counties, although they remain lower than the state as a whole."

**Heller Touts Himself As Nevada's Foremost Republican Champion For Immigrants, Opposes Arpaio Pardon.** The [Nevada Independent](#) (8/23, Rindels) reports that during a Wednesday appearance in Las Vegas before the Hispanics in Politics group, Sen. Dean Heller "touched on a pending review of national monuments." Heller said he planned to meet Wednesday with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, "who has previously toured the monuments." Heller "said he supports monuments but questions whether they should be so large and believes the process should be handled through Congress and not executive order."

**Additional Coverage.** Additional coverage of the review was provided by the [Santa Rosa \(CA\) Press Democrat](#) (8/23, Mason), the [Arizona Daily Star](#) (8/23, Davis), the [Visalia \(CA\) Times-Delta](#) (8/23, Romero), the [Santa Barbara \(CA\) Independent](#) (8/23, DeMaria), the [Paso Robles \(CA\) Daily News](#) (8/23), the [Taft \(CA\) Midway Driller](#) (8/23), and [Coastal View News \(CA\)](#) (8/23, Graham).

**Additional Commentary.** Additional commentary appeared in the [Seattle Post-Intelligencer](#) (8/23, Connelly), the [Oregonian](#) (8/23, Freeman), the [San Bernardino \(CA\) Sun](#) (8/23), the [Pasadena \(CA\) Star-News](#) (8/23), the [Victorville \(CA\) Daily Press](#) (8/23, Cook), the [Fredericksburg \(VA\) Free Lance-Star](#) (8/23, Finnerty), the [Arizona Republic](#) (8/23, Spivak), and the [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (8/22, Calvert).

### **Interior, Agriculture Secretaries To Visit Montana Wildfire.**

The [AP](#) (8/23) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue "plan to visit a Montana wildfire command post Thursday as dozens of blazes rage across the western U.S." Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift "said Wednesday that the two members of President Donald Trump's cabinet will receive a briefing from firefighters battling a 50-square-mile blaze burning northwest of Missoula." According to Swift, "the visit was requested by the two Republicans on Montana's congressional delegation, Sen. Steve Daines and Rep. Greg Gianforte."

Also reporting are the [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (8/23, Wright) and [KTVH-TV Helena \(MT\)](#) Helena, MT (8/23, Garrison).

### **Interior Dept. Agencies Could Move West, High-Level Official Says In Denver.**

The [Denver Business Journal](#) (8/23, Proctor) reports that senior officials at the Interior Department "are 'actively looking' at moving 'some' of its agencies out of Washington, D.C., to the western states, a senior Interior official said at a Denver oil and gas forum."

### **Study: Public Lands Bolster State's Economy.**

The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (8/23, Backus) reports that "Montana's wealth of public lands are an economic driver that has fueled state job and income growth enough to surpass the national average over the last 15 years, according to a study released Tuesday." The study, commissioned by the group Business for Montana's Outdoors, "showed the five fastest-growing counties in the state have the highest percentage of the lands protected for public use." The Headwaters Economics' report, "Business for Montana's Outdoors Five-year Report: Montana's Public Lands, Jobs, and the Economy" found "102,000 new jobs were created in Montana between 2000 and 2015."

### **Commentary: Interior's New Sage Grouse Protection Efforts Welcomed.**

In his column for the [Elko \(NV\) Daily Free Press](#) (8/23, Mitchell), Thomas Mitchell welcomes Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's order to implement "recommendations from a team that reviewed the previous administration's draconian land use restrictions under the guise of protecting greater sage grouse." According to Mitchell, the move by the Interior Department "should have a salutary impact on Nevada's economy."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Critics: Utah Horse Meeting Is Secretive 'Slaughter Summit'.**

The [AP](#) (8/23, Price, Sonner) reports that "swollen populations of federally-protected wild horses roaming 10 Western states are starved and damaging rangelands, Utah and U.S. government

officials said at a conference Wednesday, an invitation-only meeting that mustang-protection advocates say is promoting the slaughter of an icon of the American West." According to the article, "members of Utah's congressional delegation and a U.S. Interior Department official speaking at the National Horse and Burro Summit in Salt Lake City all described an unsustainable population of wild horses that's nearly three times the size that federal officials think the rangeland can support." Meanwhile, "horse-protection groups who weren't allowed into the Utah State University-hosted event protested outside the downtown hotel where it was held, calling it a 'slaughter summit' that's kowtowing to livestock interests, promoting increased roundups and slaughter of wild horses from California to Colorado without public input."

In an op-ed for the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (8/24, Feral), Priscilla Feral, president of Friends of Animals, writes that "the main concern of a national wild horse summit should be the *protection* of wild horses and keeping them roaming free on western public lands, not manipulated by humans by roundups or forcibly drugging them with fertility control." However, Feral claims that "the truth is the organizers don't want the public to get wind of their pro-slaughter agenda and wild horse extinction plan that placates cattle and sheep ranchers."

Also reporting are the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (8/23, Feral), the [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (8/23, O'Donoghue), and the [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (8/23, Botkin).

### **Prosecutor Vows 3rd Trial For 2 In Bundy Ranch Standoff Case.**

The [AP](#) (8/23, Ritter) reports that acting Nevada US Attorney Steven Myhre "vowed a third trial Wednesday for two men accused of armed assault on a federal officer in a 2014 standoff that stopped a cattle roundup near the ranch of states' rights figure Cliven Bundy. 'There's no question about us proceeding forward. Just so the record's clear,'" Myhre told Chief US District Judge Gloria Navarro "a day after a jury acquitted two defendants of all 10 charges but failed to reach verdicts on four charges against Eric Parker and two counts against Scott Drexler. 'Raising a firearm against a federal law enforcement officer, or any law enforcement officer, is a crime,' Myhre declared as he lost a bid to keep the two men in federal custody until the next trial. 'That's why we brought (Parker) to trial and ... intend to try him a third time.'"

The [Hill](#) (8/23, Bowden) reports that Scott Drexler, Ricky Lovelien, Eric Parker and Steven Stewart "were found not guilty on multiple charges, including conspiracy, assault on a federal officer, extortion and weapons law violations related to the standoff with federal authorities." The jury "deadlocked on four charges for Parker and two against Drexler." The Hill adds that "the standoff occurred when federal authorities obtained a court order to seize Bundy's cattle in 2014 for decades of unpaid grazing fees that totaled more than \$1 million," and "instead, hundreds of supporters converged from around the country to begin an armed standoff with authorities, which resulted in the government backing down."

The [Washington Times](#) (8/23, Richardson) reports that prosecutors "have argued that the defendants brandished weapons and placed BLM agents in fear of their lives after hundreds of Bundy supporters descended on the rural area after the agency, prompted by Cliven Bundy's refusal to pay grazing fees as a protest against the federal government, began impounding cattle." Defense attorneys "have countered that nobody was harmed in the standoff, described by the prosecution as a 'massive armed assault against federal law enforcement.'"

Additional coverage was provided by the [Arizona Republic](#) (8/23, Anglen).

### **Bishop Seeks Full Investigative Report On BLM Agent.**

The [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (8/23, O'Donoghue) reports that Rep. Rob Bishop "wants the names and other redacted information revealed in an ethics probe of the Bureau of Land Management law enforcement supervisory agent once in charge of Utah and Nevada." According to the article, "details of the more than yearlong probe by the Interior Department's Office of Inspector General were released in a February report, but key names were blacked out – including that of Dan Love, who the Deseret News confirmed was at the center of the probe." Bishop requested "the full report by no later than noon Thursday, wanting the information 'concerning serious misconduct by a senior Bureau of Land Management law enforcement manager.'"

### **Officials Propose Raising Fees For Red Rock Canyon Park.**

The [AP](#) (8/23) reports that the Bureau of Land Management is "considering raising the entrance fees for the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area in Las Vegas." BLM spokesman John Asselin, "if the fee increase is approved, drivers will be charged \$15 per visit, motorcyclists will pay \$10 and pedestrians and bicyclists will pay \$5 by 2018." Asselin "says the additional money would be used to pay for trail maintenance, search-and-rescue costs, educational program and

other upkeep costs." The BLM will "host three meetings to hear public comments on the proposal before sending it to a Resource Advisory Council for approval."

### **Remodeling Project For Prineville BLM;**

The [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (8/24) reports that "beginning next week, the Bureau of Land Management will be remodeling its district office in Prineville, and closing its front desk to visitors in the process." The project will "include upgrades to make the office more energy efficient, and the existing carpet in the office will be replaced, according to a Bureau of Land Management news release." According to the article, "during the remodeling project, which is expected to take several months, the district office's front-desk staff will be stationed next door at the Ochoco National Forest headquarters, at 3160 NE 3rd St."

Additional coverage was provided by [KTVZ-TV](#) Bend, OR (8/23).

### **County Sets Protocols For Snake Transfers.**

The [Jackson Hole \(WY\) News & Guide](#) (8/23, Gross) reports that Teton County commissioners "approved a set of guidelines to shape the transfer of 24 Bureau of Land Management parcels to Teton County ownership." Since federal lands are "involved a special bill must be introduced in Congress." According to the article, "once the county reaches agreements with the parcels' neighbors, it will request that U.S. Sen. John Barrasso draft federal legislation authorizing the transfer of a 'bundle' of five parcels."

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **Our View: Neil Creek Shows Salmon Projects Work.**

In an editorial, the [Medford \(OR\) Mail Tribune](#) (8/23) points to the stream restoration work that has "brought juvenile coho and chinook salmon back to Neil Creek" as an example of a project that works. Meanwhile, "irrigators who object to federal protections hope the Trump administration will agree to convene what is known as the 'God squad,' a committee with the power to grant exemptions to environmental regulations." The paper concludes: "It's unclear whether the God squad will be convened, or if it is, whether it will issue the ruling the irrigators want. But here in Southern Oregon, the Neil Creek project shows protection methods are working."

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Judge: Bears Near US-Canada Border Merit Endangered Status.**

The [AP](#) (8/23, Volz) reports that "animals and plants can be considered endangered even if they are not on the brink of extinction, a judge ruled in overturning the U.S. government's reclassification of a small population of grizzly bears living in the forests of Montana and Idaho near the Canada border." Tuesday's decision by U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen "said that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is prohibited from narrowing the definition an endangered species in its future decisions without explaining why it wants to make the policy change."

[Reuters](#) (8/23, Zuckerman) reports that the FWS "in 2014 determined the fewer than 50 grizzlies that roam the Cabinet Mountains and Yaak River drainage in the Northern Rockies were not in danger of extinction and did not warrant re-classifying as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act." The Alliance for the Wild Rockies sued, "arguing the so-called Cabinet-Yaak population of grizzlies would go extinct unless U.S. wildlife managers tightened restrictions on logging, mining and other activities in bear habitat, all safeguards that would come with endangered status." The judge "sided with the conservation group in a ruling that found that the Fish and Wildlife Service had violated U.S. law in determining that the number of outsized, hump-shouldered bears in the Cabinet-Yaak ecosystem could reach a targeted recovery goal of 100 without added protections."

Also reporting are the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (8/23, Chaney) and [Law360](#) (8/23, Sieniuc).

### **Litigation Reform Needed To Curb Lawsuits Undermining Conservation.**

The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (8/23, Mooney) reports that "well-endowed environmental advocacy groups have exploited the 'perverse incentives' of federal laws with 'sue and settle' arrangements that enrich trial lawyers at the expense of taxpayers while undercutting successful conservation

efforts, according to congressional figures and attorneys who favor litigation reform." The House Committee on Natural Resources held a hearing on July 17 on "five new bills aimed at reforming the ESA." A spokesperson for the House Natural Resources Committee said the "full slate of bills has not been finalized" but "various ESA reform measures will advance through committee in September."

### **Vern Buchanan Urges FWS To Create A Habitat For Florida Panthers.**

The [Sunshine State \(FL\) News](#) (8/23, Derby) reports that Rep. Vern Buchanan "continued his efforts on behalf of the Florida panther this week, urging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to continue to protect that animal." In a letter to Greg Sheehan, the acting director of the FWS, "Buchanan called on the federal government to continue its current efforts instead of removing them from the endangered species list." Buchanan wrote, "I am writing to express my strong concern over reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may weaken protections for Florida panthers under the Endangered Species Act. While it is heartening to see the Florida panther population increase to more than 200 in recent years, major hurdles remain to the full recovery of these majestic animals. That is why it is essential to maintain current federal protections to prevent one of the world's rarest cats from becoming extinct."

In an editorial, the [Orlando \(FL\) Sentinel](#) (8/23) supports continuing protections for the panthers. The paper argues that "instead of making things easier for big land owners, state and federal officials should boost efforts to save Florida's big cats and protect the open spaces where they live."

### **Grizzly Delisting Jeopardizes Population.**

In an op-ed for the [Jackson Hole \(WY\) News & Guide](#) (8/23, Mader), Sharon Mader, the Grand Teton senior program manager for National Parks Conservation Association, explains why the National Parks Conservation Association plans to sue over the removal of the grizzly bear from the endangered species list. Mader argues that "the final decision fails to assure adequate protections for GYE grizzlies into the future."

Additional coverage of the grizzly bear decision was provided by the [Planet Jackson Hole \(WY\)](#) (8/23, Thomasma).

## **National Park Service**

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### **Trump Goes To Bat For NRA-Backed Bill By Stifling National Parks Director.**

[McClatchy](#) (8/23, Leavenworth) reports that efforts by the National Park Service to express concerns about the impact of an NRA-backed bill that "would restrict" the NPS "from regulating hunting and fishing within park boundaries" have so far been halted, according to a leaked memo from the Department of Interior. NPS Acting Director Michael Reynolds had submitted to Interior's Legislative Counsel a June 30 memo "detailing his agency's objections to the draft legislation," and received a response from Interior "with sections of Reynolds' concerns crossed out." According to Jeff Ruch, executive director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility and the individual who obtained the leaked memo, agency officials "were told they could not repeat their concerns to Congress."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Daily Caller](#) (8/23, Pearce), the [Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette](#) (8/24, Leavenworth), the [Daily Intelligencer \(NY\)](#) (8/23, Levitz) and the [Wisconsin Gazette](#) (8/23, Pacelle).

### **Parks Service Issues Permit For San Francisco Rally.**

The [AP](#) (8/23, Elias) reports that "federal authorities on Wednesday issued a permit to a politically conservative group for a Saturday afternoon rally in San Francisco that local officials fear could turn violent." The National Park Service "had earlier told Patriot Prayer leader Joey Gibson that he had permission for the event, but withheld issuing the permit until the group agreed to several conditions, which include banning guns, tiki torches and other items that can be turned into weapons." The NPS "said denying Patriot Prayer a permit would violate the organization's free speech rights."

Also reporting are [Fox News](#) (8/23, Wallace), the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (8/23, Alexander), the [Independent \(UK\)](#) (8/23, Francisco), [KPIX-TV San Francisco](#) San Francisco (8/23), and [KPIX-TV San Francisco](#) San Francisco (8/22, Caen).

### **Coming Soon To The National Mall: A Pro-Trump Protest, Juggalo Rally, Liberal March And**

## **Weddings – On The Same Day.**

The [Washington Post](#) (8/23, Stein) reports that the National Park Service is “preparing for one of its busiest days of the year in the nation’s capital next month – a fall day when more than 30 events are expected to coincide, including a pro-Trump rally and a demonstration of Insane Clown Posse fans who have dubbed themselves Juggalos.” NPS spokesman Mike Litterst “said the agency is sifting through applications to determine where best to situate each group on Sept. 16.” The U.S. Park Police “wouldn’t discuss its security plan for the day, but said the agency is prepared to provide security while protecting First Amendment activities on federal property.”

## **Maine’s American Indian Tribes Getting \$80K For Preservation.**

The [AP](#) (8/24) reports that the National Park Service is “providing more than \$80,000 to Maine’s American Indian tribes to help with historic preservation.” The tribal offices receiving the funds include those of the Aroostook Band of Micmacs, the Passamaquoddy Tribe and the Penobscot Nation.

## **Park Service Fixes Family Cemetery Within Flight 93 Memorial.**

The [AP](#) (8/23) reports that the National Park Service has “restored a family cemetery that just happens to lie within the Flight 93 National Memorial, which honors those killed on the hijacked airliner that crashed in western Pennsylvania during the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.” The cemetery “belongs to the Sorber family, who buried relatives there from 1856 to 1892.” The NPS “says it has straightened headstones, landscaped and cleaned up the small cemetery, and fenced it in.” The NPS will “offer tours of the fixed up cemetery on Tuesday.”

## **Great Smoky Mountains Observation Tower Closes For Repairs.**

The [AP](#) (8/23) reports that the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has “closed an observation tower at the park’s highest point for extensive renovations and repairs.” The Clingmans Dome Observation Tower “closed Wednesday and will remain closed through the end of the 2017 season for rehabilitation work, including repairing deteriorated areas on the tower’s columns and walls, repointing stone masonry and stabilizing support beams at the base of the ramp.”

## **National Park Awarded Student Conservation Association Medal.**

The [Peninsula \(WA\) Daily News](#) (8/23) reports that “the Student Conservation Association has awarded Olympic National Park its Founder’s Medal.” According to park interim spokeswoman Penny Wagner, “the park is one of the original partners of the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and the only park to provide young SCA stewards with service opportunities in each of the past 60 years.” Margie Brown, chairwoman of the SCA board, “presented the medal to park Superintendent Sarah Creachbaum at park headquarters in Port Angeles on Aug. 12.”

## **LBJ State, National Parks To Honor 109th Birthday Of Former President.**

The [Fredericksburg \(TX\) Standard](#) (8/23) reports that “in honor of the late president, the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park and Lyndon B. Johnson State Park and Historic Site will celebrate the 109th anniversary of President Johnson’s birth on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 26-27.”

## **Shark Bites Surfer’s Paddle Board In Shallow Water At Cape Cod Beach.**

[CBS News](#) (8/23) reports that “a Cape Cod beach was closed until further notice after a shark bit a surfer’s paddle board Wednesday morning.” The National Park Service “in Cape Cod said on its Facebook page that the person on the board wasn’t bitten or injured.” The NPS “said it was investigating the incident alongside members of the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries and the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy.”

## **Office Of Insular Affairs**

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## **North Korea Hints It Is Developing More Advanced Ballistic Missiles.**

The [New York Times](#) (8/23, Sang-Hun) reports North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, when visiting the Chemical Material Institute of the Academy of Defense Science, ordered the production of more rocket engines and warheads, according to state news media. A photograph in the state-run newspaper Rodong Sinmun “showed what appeared to be a conceptual diagram for a missile called the Pukguksong-3,” which would be “a more powerful solid-fuel ballistic missile” than the

Pukguksong-1. The missile "was identified as an 'underwater strategic ballistic missile.'"

[Reuters](#) (8/23, Kim) reports, however, that the KCNA news agency's report, which came soon after Secretary of State Tillerson "appeared to make a peace overture, welcoming what he called recent restraint shown by the reclusive North," did not include "the traditionally robust threats against the United States." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/23, Cheng) also covers this story.

**Russian Diplomat Warns Against Further Sanctions Against North Korea.** The [AP](#) (8/23) reports Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov warned against expanding sanctions against North Korea, saying, "the scope of sanctions already endorsed by the U.N. Security Council is such that any possibilities of expanding such measures have been exhausted." He also "bemoaned Washington's 'absolute and boundless' emphasis on developing new sanctions against Pyongyang" and called for the UN Security Council to focus on a political settlement.

### **Former Marshall Islands Foreign Minister Tony DeBrum Dies.**

[NPR](#) (8/22, Shapiro) reports that "the former foreign minister for the Marshall Islands, Tony deBrum, has died." DeBrum was "an advocate for climate policies that would keep his homeland from drowning under rising seas." The [New York Times](#) (8/22, Friedman) reports that de Brum "died on Monday in the capital city, Majuro. He was 72."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (8/22).

### **Air Link Woes Are Barriers For FSM Tourism.**

[Radio New Zealand](#) (8/23) reports that "the president of the Federated States of Micronesia Peter Christian says access and regional inter-airline agreements are holding back tourism." Christian has "been in talks with the South Pacific Tourism Organisation to improve air access and develop the Chinese tourism market."

### **Springdale Schools Welcomes First Marshallese Teacher.**

[KNWA-TV](#) Fayetteville, AR (8/22, Chambers) reports that Springdale's "school district educates over 2,500 Marshallese students," and "for the first time in history, the district is putting a relatable face at the head of the class." At Sonora Middle School, where "over 20% of the students are Marshallese," physical education teacher Jessica Olson "became the first Marshallese teacher in the history of Springdale School District."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Magnitude 3.3 Earthquake Shakes Parts Of Central Oklahoma.**

The [AP](#) (8/23) reports the USGS recorded a 3.3 magnitude earthquake in central Oklahoma on Wednesday. The quake occurred at a depth of about two miles. No injuries or damage was reported.

## **Top National News**

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### **As Trump Calls For Unity In Reno, Media Points To Contrast With Phoenix Remarks.**

While coverage of President Trump's speech before the American Legion National Convention in Reno is largely favorable, most national reports juxtapose it with the President's Tuesday night speech in Phoenix, focusing on the marked differences in tone and content to paint the President as erratic. Several analyses say that the President stuck to his scripted text on Wednesday, while his Tuesday speech was off the cuff.

Lester Holt asked in opening [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/23, lead story, 2:25), "Healer or antagonist? The answer may depend up on which Donald Trump you heard over the last 24 hours. After casting himself as the victim of bad news coverage at a fired-up rally in Phoenix, blasting everyone from the media to fellow Republicans, the President appeared in Nevada today, where he returned to a call for unity based on common values," a "head-snapping change of tone."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/23, lead story, 3:00, Muir) reported that Trump went "on the attack" in Phoenix – "defiant, standing by his decisions and his words. Then today, another speech and a starkly different tone." ABC's Cecilia Vega: "At the American Legion today, President Trump calling on the nation to come together." Trump: "It is time to heal the wounds that divide us and to seek a new unity based on the common values that unite us." Vega: "It

came just hours after his own divisive rhetoric in Phoenix. For 75 fiery minutes, he unloaded."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (8/23, lead story, 2:50, Mason) reported that in Phoenix, "the on-again-off-again presidential teleprompter was off again, and the President went off again on the media, fellow Republicans, and anything else that came to mind." Wolf Blitzer said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (8/23), "After an off-the-rails rant in Phoenix in which he angrily attacked the news media, Democrats and members of his own party, President Trump was back on script today in Reno calling for unity in a speech to veterans."

[KTVN-TV](#) Reno, NV (8/23, 6:32 p.m. PDT) reported that Trump spoke "to a packed room of veterans" and focused on "issues facing our veterans and the military. While the American Legion is a nonpartisan crowd, most of its members seemed to like his overall message." [KLAS-TV](#) Las Vegas (8/23, 6:33 p.m. PDT) reported that Trump "didn't insult the media or refer to any of Nevada's competitive 2018 political races in his 22-minute speech to veterans. Instead, he ran down a list of reforms enacted since he took office, and signed a bill that shortens the period veterans have to wait to have their appeals decided." [KSNV-TV](#) Las Vegas (8/23, 3:04 p.m. PDT) reported, "This was very friendly Trump territory at the Reno Sparks Convention Center."

The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (8/23, Litz) reports, "In a measured 20-minute speech that deviated little from his prepared remarks," Trump "told the American Legion that they serve as a model for 'the bonds of loyalty' that are needed for the country to find unity again." The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (8/23, Delaney) reports that the President "sidestepped political controversy for the most part" in a "patriotic" speech. Trump "couldn't resist a few political comments, however, noting that the veterans he spoke to backstage before his public remarks were 'much more proud than they were last year at this time.'" The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/23, Ballhaus) reports that Trump invited Medal of Honor recipient Donald Ballard up on stage, where the Vietnam veteran praised the President.

The [Military Times](#) (8/23, Shane) reports, "Trump touted veterans as an example of unity and harmony for a divided America...just hours after a fiery campaign rally in Phoenix the night before." [Stars And Stripes](#) (8/23, Wentling) calls Trump's remarks "a shift from what Trump said just yesterday during a divisive, campaign-style event in Phoenix."

The [New York Times](#) (8/23, Landler) reports under the headline "Different Day, Different Audience, And A Completely Different Trump" that the President "reverted to his script as commander in chief" on the day after "he delivered an aggrieved and impromptu defense of his comments on the violence in Charlottesville." The Reno speech "was a day-and-night contrast to Mr. Trump's performance Tuesday night in Phoenix. ... But such contrasts have become a recurring motif of his presidency: Mr. Trump has toggled between Teleprompter Trump and Unplugged Trump every day since the deadly clashes in Virginia, leaving Washington and the rest of the nation with a chronic case of rhetorical whiplash."

The [AP](#) (8/23, Bykowicz, Lemire) writes, "It was a tale of two Trumps in the desert Southwest." The [Washington Post](#) (8/23, Rucker) writes, "In the span of 48 hours this week, President Trump has boomeranged among three roles – the commander in chief, the divider and the uniter. Like a contestant on one of his reality TV shows, Trump has taken on contrasting personas, showcasing divergent traits with flourishes seemingly to survive another day of his beleaguered presidency. Or, as Trump the television producer might put it, to keep up the ratings."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/23, Finnegan, Willon) reports, "A day after stoking the nation's racial tensions" in Phoenix, Trump "set aside his anger and called for healing 'the wounds that divide us'" in a "subdued speech, read from a teleprompter, [that] contrasted sharply with his ad-libbed tirade" on Tuesday night. [CNN](#) (8/23, Bradner, Tatum, Liptak) reports on its website that Trump "struck a drastically different tone Wednesday." [US News & World Report](#) (8/23, Camera) says Trump "largely stuck to his script," and [Politico](#) (8/23, Conway) calls the speech "a significant change in tone" for Trump.

White House reporter Kaitlin Collins said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (8/23), "I think you know which one is the real one, and we all do. It's when he's not reading off of the teleprompter. ... When he was on the teleprompter, he was talking about unity, love, patriotism. When he was off the teleprompter, he was attacking the media, threatening to shut down the government and bragging about how big his apartment is."

[Bloomberg News](#) (8/23, Olorunnipa, Epstein), the [Washington Examiner](#) (8/23, Westwood), and [The Hill](#) (8/23, Fabian) also report.

**Trump Signs VA Reform Bill After Reno Speech.** The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (8/23, Dupree) reports that following his speech, the President "signed the latest bipartisan bill from Congress into law that seeks to make new reforms" at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

[Townhall](#) (8/23, Pavlich) says the new law will "allow veterans to appeal or ask questions about their benefits in a more timely and organized fashion."

**Media Analyses: Debating Trump's Mental Health Moves Into "The Mainstream."** Under the headline "Amid Mounting Bipartisan Concerns, Debating Trump's Mental Health Becomes Cottage Industry," [USA Today](#) (8/23, O'Donnell) reports that Sen. Bob Corker (R-TN) last week said that Trump "hasn't 'been able to demonstrate the stability' needed for success." And in the wake of the President's Phoenix speech, ex-DNI Director James Clapper on Wednesday "questioned Trump's 'fitness to be in this office' and said he was worried about the president's access to the nuclear codes." USA Today adds, "Until now, talk of Trump's erratic behavior and alleged narcissism was common on social media, late-night talk shows and among political opponents. But Trump's 'fire and fury' comments about North Korea," the Phoenix rally, "and changing response to the violent protests in Charlottesville, Va., crossed a line for some Republicans and brought the conversation into the mainstream, even among some supporters."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (8/23, story 2, 1:00, Mason) broadcast CNN footage of Clapper saying of Trump's Monday address on Afghanistan and the President's Tuesday speech in Phoenix, "It's interesting to contrast last night's teleprompter Trump performance versus tonight, which is, of course, the real Trump, just as it was in the unglued, impromptu press conference at Trump Tower. So I just find this extremely disturbing." CNN anchor Don Lemon asked Clapper, "Are you questioning his fitness?" Clapper replied, "Yes, I do. I really question his ability to – his fitness to be in this office, and I also am beginning to wonder about his motivation for it. Maybe he is looking for a way out."

[Politico](#) (8/23, Marinucci) reported, "California Democrats are stoking a debate over" the President's "mental health and fitness for office, opening a new front in the resistance to" Trump "but raising fears that the line of criticism could backfire. As early talk of impeachment wanes and questions about Trump's stability have surfaced after his volatile responses to the violence in Charlottesville – most recently by [Clapper and Corker] – California's Democratic House delegation has seized on an issue that until recently was limited to the Internet fever swamps." As one of several examples, Politico said that Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) "last week introduced a congressional resolution urging Trump to seek a medical and psychiatric evaluation to determine if he is unfit for the office."

[USA Today](#) (8/23, O'Donnell) reports that "psychiatrists including Bandy Lee, editor of the upcoming book The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump, worry about how Trump responds to what are likely stressful crises with fiery rhetoric that could provoke violence. There's evidence to support their concerns, given heightened terrorism concerns. Health company Sharecare did a voice analysis of Trump's stress during recent public appearances for USA TODAY. It found talking about firing former FBI Director James Comey, who was leading the Russia probe, did not appear to induce stress in Trump. Discussing the Islamic State did."

**Axelrod Warns Talk Of Removing Trump "A Very Dangerous Road To Go Down."** [The Hill](#) (8/23, Shelbourne) reported that during a Wednesday appearance on CNN, ex-Obama advisor David Axelrod "cautioned against talk that...Trump is unfit for office, saying it opens the door to a potentially 'dangerous road.'" Commenting on Clapper's remarks, Axelrod said, "The inference was that somehow there should be some effort to remove him, or at least that's how some people would have heard it. And I think we have to be very, very careful when we have these discussions because we have a system, a Constitutional system." Axelrod added, "Remember a third of the country supports this president, that's a very dangerous road to go down. And if you ever did go down that road, you're open a Pandora's box that will never end."

**Media Fires Back At Trump Over Phoenix, Frets About Potential Violence.** In the wake of Trump's Phoenix address, in which he lambasted the media, several reports focus on the press' reaction to the President's attacks. Some reports warn the comments could result in violence against journalists.

Under the headline "Media Lets Loose Its Fury After Trump Attacks," [The Hill](#) (8/23, Easley) reported that media members on Wednesday ripped Trump "after he railed against the press" in Phoenix, calling "journalists 'dishonest people' who 'don't like our country.'" For example, said The Hill, CNN anchor Don Lemon "accused the president of 'trying to ignite a civil war' and likened Trump to a 6-year-old child with imaginary friends. 'He's unhinged,' Lemon said," adding of Trump's speech, "There was no sanity there. ... [Trump is] clearly wounded by the rational people who are abandoning him in droves, meaning the business people and the people in Washington now who are questioning his fitness for office and whether he is stable."

In her [Washington Post](#) (8/23, Sullivan) column, Margaret Sullivan says that Trump's Tuesday attacks on the media were "both shocking and completely predictable. Shocking because it was the most sustained attack any president has made on the news media," but "predictable

because this is exactly what Trump does when he's in trouble. He finds an enemy and punches as hard as he can. Make no mistake, he is in trouble." Sullivan adds, "Under siege, Trump needs a foil more than ever, so these media attacks are only going to grow in intensity. It will be journalists' continued challenge not to take the bait, to refuse to play the assigned role of presidential enemy."

Writing for the [New York Times](#) (8/23, Rutenberg), Jim Rutenberg says that Trump's "latest attack on the media came at a time of heightened racial tension stoked by a white supremacists' rally in Charlottesville, Va., and continuing now in the national debate over removing statues that commemorate Confederate figures from the Civil War. Mr. Trump's speech in Phoenix reprise a question spawned by his raucous rallies during the presidential campaign: How long before someone is seriously hurt, or worse?"

The [New York Times](#) (8/23, Victor) reports that Trump's "angry condemnation of the news media during" the rally "heightened the fear among journalists that verbal attacks on the profession could lead to physical attacks." The Times says Trump's broadsides of the media "took even seasoned journalists by surprise. He called journalists 'sick people,' accused the news media of 'trying to take away our history and our heritage' and questioned their patriotism." Committee to Protect Journalists advocacy director Courtney Radsch told the Times, "To see this sort of attack coming yet again from the president is deeply disturbing. It creates an environment in which attacks on the press, both verbal and potentially physical, could become common."

The [New York Times](#) (8/23) editorializes, "Trump trotted out the usual enemies, the malefactors in the 'very dishonest media' and the 'anarchists' of the left. ... But this time he gave equal billing to his fellow Republicans in Congress – the people he will surely need if he hopes to deliver on infrastructure or anything else of value to the working-class Americans who elected him." The President offered "77 minutes worth of anger that began, as the evening wore on, to exhaust even his most fervid listeners, who began quietly to fade away."

The [Washington Post](#) (8/23) editorializes, "There is a danger...that we become inured to President Trump's mockery of democratic norms and common decency." The Post juxtaposes Trump's Phoenix comments "what we imagine a presidential president – a president we could be proud of – might have said." The editorial goes through several of the President's remarks.

**WPost Analysis: Trump Lost Attention Of Crowd With Long Phoenix Speech.** The [Washington Post](#) (8/23, Johnson) reports under the headline "As Trump Ranted And Rambled In Phoenix, His Crowd Slowly Thinned" that "as the night dragged on" Tuesday, "many in the crowd lost interest in what the president was saying. Hundreds left early, while others plopped down on the ground, scrolled through their social media feeds or started up a conversation with their neighbors." Though Trump "has long been the master of reading the mood of a room and quickly adjusting his message to satisfy as many of his fans as possible, his rage seemed to cloud his senses." [Roll Call](#) (8/23, Bennett) writes, "Trump roared, blamed, boasted, omitted and obfuscated Tuesday night at a campaign rally in Phoenix, but there was one thing he decided against doing: selling his stalled legislative agenda."

**AP Fact Check: Trump Selectively Quoted His Own Charlottesville Remarks In Phoenix.** The [AP](#) (8/23, Lemire) writes in a Fact Check piece that Trump "accused the media of selectively quoting from his remarks" about Charlottesville, then "turned around and did the same thing himself: At a Tuesday night rally in Phoenix, the president re-read portions of his comments about the violence – but left out the specific phrase that generated all the controversy."

Jake Tapper said on [CNN's The Lead](#) (8/23) that Trump "attempted historical revisionism, insisting he had never done anything but condemn the racists in Charlottesville. In this retelling, the President omitted the controversial parts of his post-Charlottesville remarks" in which he condemned hatred, bigotry, and violence "on many sides," which "was the part that was controversial." [Fact Check](#) (8/23, Kiely) headlines its 4,500-word analysis of the Arizona speech "At Phoenix Rally, Trump Revises History, Exaggerates Accomplishments And Makes False Claims."

**WS Journal Editor Chides Staff's Trump Coverage As "Commentary Dressed Up As News Reporting."** The [New York Times](#) (8/23, Grynbaum) reports that Wall Street Journal editor-in-chief Gerard Baker "has faced unease and frustration in his newsroom over his stewardship of the newspaper's coverage of...Trump, which some journalists there say has lacked toughness and verve. Some staff members expressed similar concerns on Wednesday after Mr. Baker, in a series of blunt late-night emails, criticized his staff over their coverage of Mr. Trump's Tuesday rally in Phoenix, describing their reporting as overly opinionated. 'Sorry. This is commentary dressed up as news reporting,' Mr. Baker wrote" early "Wednesday morning to a group of Journal reporters and editors, in response to a draft of the rally article that was intended for the newspaper's final

edition. He added in a follow-up, 'Could we please just stick to reporting what he said rather than packaging it in exegesis and selective criticism?'"

***AP, WPost Analyses Differ On Whether Carson "Likely" Violated Law With Rally Appearance.***

The [AP](#) (8/23, Kerr) reports, "Legal experts said Wednesday that" HUD Secretary Carson's appearance with Trump at the Phoenix rally "likely did not violate federal law." Following the rally, "questions were raised on Twitter about whether Carson had violated the federal law known as the Hatch Act, which bars most executive branch officials from using their government positions to influence elections." HUD spokesman Jerry Brown "said the agency doesn't think Carson did anything wrong. 'His travel and lodging were not paid for by the department. He was there in his personal capacity. He didn't discuss HUD during the speech.'"

However, writing for the [Washington Post](#) (8/23, Bump), Phillip Bump says that prior to Carson taking "the stage at" the rally, "the announcer introduced him. 'The secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Dr. Ben Carson,' the voice intoned, prompting cheers from the audience. And, as simply as that, a law was likely broken." Bump adds, "Among the prohibitions included in the Hatch Act is one prohibiting Cabinet secretaries from leveraging their positions for a political cause. That means that the head of, say," HUD, "can't appear at a campaign rally in a way that implies he's doing so in an official capacity. Say, by being introduced with his official title."

***Police Responded To Protesters With "Tear Gas, Pepper Spray And Rubber Bullets."*** Drawing from a Daily Mail [report](#) (8/22, Martosko), the [New York Post](#) (8/23, Moore) says that protesters outside Trump's Tuesday speech in Phoenix "tossed rocks and bottles at police who responded with tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets. ... At one point, a man wearing a gas mask kicked a tear gas canister back at police. Moments later, the protester doubled over in pain as a cloud of dust spilled from his groin area. A news anchor for the local CBS station remarked on the unfolding scene that was caught on camera. 'A guy just got shot with a rubber bullet,' the anchor said as the stricken man was dragged away by another demonstrator. 'So – er – yeah, the officers are not, are not messing around at all.'"

### **White House, McConnell Downplay Reports Of Feud.**

Amid "reports of a deteriorating relationship with President Trump," Senate Majority Leader McConnell "sought to dispel" the reports and "insist[ed] they remain in 'regular contact over shared Republican goals,'" the [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/23, Mascaro) reports. The Times calls McConnell's statement "uncharacteristic," but adds that a New York Times report which said "the two men had not spoken since Trump berated McConnell in a phone call earlier this month following the collapse of the healthcare bill, provoked a response." Likewise, the [Washington Times](#) (8/23, Miller) says the White House "pushed back against reports of a feud."

[Reuters](#) (8/23, Becker) says both Trump and McConnell "emphasized their plans to cooperate on shared goals." The White House issued a statement which said the two leaders "remain united on many shared priorities, including middle class tax relief, strengthening the military, constructing a southern border wall, and other important issues." A statement from McConnell said, "The President and I, and our teams, have been and continue to be in regular contact about our shared goals. ... We have a lot of work ahead of us, and we are committed to advancing our shared agenda together and anyone who suggests otherwise is clearly not part of the conversation." On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/23, story 2, 0:45, Muir), Cecilia Vega also reported that the McConnell camp is "dismissing this story" and the White House said "that both sides will indeed meet after the August recess."

The [Washington Post](#) (8/23, Phillip) quotes White House press secretary Sarah Sanders as saying, "They will hold previously scheduled meetings following the August recess to discuss these critical items with members of the congressional leadership and the president's Cabinet. ... White House and leadership staff are coordinating regarding the details of those meetings." [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/23, story 2, 0:15, Holt) also reported briefly on the story.

According to the [AP](#) (8/23, Peoples, Fram), the "escalating tension" between Trump and McConnell "is threatening the GOP's re-election prospects and its ability to govern." McConnell and other Republicans are "particularly upset by Trump's consistent attacks against vulnerable Republican senators who need his help, according to a person familiar with the Kentucky Republican's thinking." According to this person, "McConnell questions whether Trump is capable of righting his struggling presidency."

Wolf Blitzer said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (8/23), "A Republican senator tells CNN his colleagues are rallying behind" McConnell "after some sharp attacks by President Trump. Sources say their last phone call broke down in a shouting match with the President cursing at

McConnell." CNN senior congressional reporter Manu Raju said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (8/23) that Senate Republicans are "not happy with the President. They are overwhelmingly siding with Mitch McConnell. I talked to one Republican today. He said it had a unifying effect within the Republican conference. They're getting behind him."

[The Hill](#) (8/23, Bolton, Wong) describes a Republican Party "at the brink of breaking out into open warfare with itself after months of straining to keep its internal divisions under control." Trump "is firing warning shots at Capitol Hill and openly criticizing" McConnell. House Freedom Caucus Chairman Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) is warning that House Speaker Ryan and McConnell "could lose their jobs if they fall short on tax reform and funding the U.S.-Mexico border wall." At the same times, GOP leaders "are scrambling to deflect blame." Ryan has been emphasizing the number of bills passed by the House in "a tacit complaint that it is the Senate where Republican legislation is dying."

### **Hill GOP Concerned By Trump's Shutdown Threat Over Border Wall Funding.**

The [New York Times](#) (8/23, Davis) reports, "President Trump issued an extraordinary challenge to his own party" in his Tuesday evening remarks in Phoenix, "threatening to shut down the government in a matter of weeks if Congress did not fund" a US-Mexico border wall, and "followed up on that threat on Wednesday by going after" Sen. Jeff Flake, "who has been skeptical" of the wall plan, on Twitter. Trump [tweeted](#), "Not a fan of Jeff Flake, weak on crime & border!" The [Washington Post](#) (8/23, Debonis, Viebeck, Paletta) reports that "Trump's threat to shut down the federal government over his demand for \$1.6 billion in border wall money could upend delicate negotiations" on keeping the government operating past September 30, "further entrenching Democrats against what they see as an unpopular president scrambling to appeal to his base of supporters."

[Politico](#) (8/23, Dawsey) reports that Trump's Tuesday "vow...mirrors private comments he has made to advisers in recent days." The President "has told his advisers he will not accept a deal on other issues without money for the wall 'and it has to be real money,' said one senior White House official." But [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/23, Peterson, Hughes) reports that Capitol Hill Republicans were alarmed by the threat. [Reuters](#) (8/23, Mikolajczak, Morgan) reports that Republicans "rebuked the president," with the [Washington Times](#) (8/23, Sherfinski) reporting that House Speaker Ryan said, "I don't think a government shutdown is necessary and I don't think most people want to see a government shutdown – ourselves included." On the [CBS Evening News](#) (8/23, story 3, 2:15, Mason), Major Garrett said, "The President...rattled GOP congressional leaders with [the] threat."

[The Hill](#) (8/23, Bernal) reports that Democratic leaders also said they would not give in. Senate Minority Leader Schumer "said Trump's demands for wall funding in a government-funding bill would lead to a shutdown," while House Minority Leader Pelosi said, "President Trump's multi-billion dollar border wall boondoggle is strongly opposed by Democrats and many Republicans. Democrats will stand fast against the immoral, ineffective border wall and the rest of Republicans' unacceptable poison pill riders."

[Bloomberg News](#) (8/23, Wasson) writes, "Trump's shutdown threat may just be part of the routine bluster he employs in negotiations, but it still raises the specter of a potentially market-shaking showdown if he decides to follow through on it." In fact, [Reuters](#) (8/23, Chin) reports, "stocks closed lower...as investors grappled with [the] threat" from the President.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/23) says in an editorial that while the threat was popular with Trump's Arizona audience, it is reckless and counterproductive, with GOP leaders knowing that they and the unpopular Trump will take the blame for any shutdown. The Journal says Democrats will be happy to let Trump force a shutdown.

**Steve King Calls Border Wall A "Mandate From The American People."** Rep. Steve King (R-IA) said on [Fox News' Tucker Carlson Tonight](#) (8/23) that the border wall "is a mandate that came from the American people. The mandate says build the wall. The President said he is going to build the wall. If he vetoes an appropriations bill because it lacks funding for the wall...the votes won't be there to override a presidential veto and eventually this will get done."

## **Editorial Wrap-Up**

### **New York Times.**

**"The President Turns On His Own."** The [New York Times](#) (8/23) editorializes, "Trump trotted out the usual enemies, the malefactors in the 'very dishonest media' and the 'anarchists' of the

left. ... But this time he gave equal billing to his fellow Republicans in Congress – the people he will surely need if he hopes to deliver on infrastructure or anything else of value to the working-class Americans who elected him.” The President offered “77 minutes worth of anger that began, as the evening wore on, to exhaust even his most fervid listeners, who began quietly to fade away.”

**“New York Democrats Snub The Voters.”** In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (8/24) writes New York City politicians’ “tendency to freeze out” voters “has been on conspicuous display in recent weeks,” with Democrats timing departures to come after the deadline to enter primaries “so that picking successors would in effect fall to party leaders, not to registered Democratic voters.” Such “shenanigans foster cynicism, which is already deep enough,” an the Times call for political leaders to act “to put power where it belongs, with the voters.”

### **Washington Post.**

**“What A Presidential President Would Have Said In Phoenix.”** The [Washington Post](#) (8/23) editorializes, “There is a danger...that we become inured to President Trump’s mockery of democratic norms and common decency.” The Post juxtaposes Trump’s Phoenix comments “what we imagine a presidential president – a president we could be proud of – might have said.” The editorial goes through several of the President’s remarks.

**“Trump Has Sent The Right Signal To Egypt. But There’s More He Needs To Do.”** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (8/23) calls the Administration’s move to withhold aid “an appropriate response to the most severe repression in” Egypt’s modern history and the country’s “collaboration with North Korea,” but warns the move isn’t due to a shift in President Trump’s views but was “largely forced by congressional legislation, and they are unlikely to have much effect unless there is follow-up in the next federal budget.” The Post calls for the Administration and Congress to “fundamentally reform aid to Egypt.” The Post argues the end of cash-flow financing “provides a chance to undertake a wholesale restructuring of the aid” and suggests shifting some of it to Tunisia, “a struggling democracy that, unlike its neighbor, is eager to partner with the United States.”

### **Wall Street Journal.**

**“Cuomo’s Natural Gas Blockade.”** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/23) writes that New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s blocking last year of the Constitution pipeline transporting natural gas from Pennsylvania to upstate New York and New England has resulted in fewer jobs and less local government revenue, has demonstrated an abuse of state discretion over environmental rules, has increased energy costs, and has caused a halt to natural gas to a region that needs another power source to replace shuttering nuclear and coal plants.

**“Beating His Own Head Against The Wall.”** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/23) says in an editorial that while the threat to shut down the government over the border wall was popular with President Trump’s Arizona audience, it is reckless and counterproductive, with GOP leaders knowing that they and the unpopular Trump will take the blame for any shutdown. The Journal says Democrats will be happy to let Trump force a shutdown.

**“Nisman And The Iranians.”** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/23) writes that a new toxicology analysis of the body of late Argentine prosecutor Alberto Nisman – who had been investigating Iran’s role in the 1994 bombing of a Buenos Aires Jewish community center – shows that the drug ketamine was present, indicating what one criminal prosecutor called a “mountain of evidence” that Nisman’s death was a homicide. The Journal concludes that this new evidence may lead to the truth of Nisman’s death, potentially at the hands of Iran, if the Argentine judiciary allows the investigation to proceed unimpeded.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.**

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[White House Sets Rules For Military Transgender Ban](#)  
[How Budget Carriers Transformed The Airline Industry—In 14 Charts](#)  
[Big Economies Are Growing In Sync For First Time In Years](#)  
[Ad Giant Signals Deepening Industry Woes Amid Shift To Digital](#)

**New York Times:**

[Trump Widens Rift With Congress As Critical Showdowns Loom](#)  
[Spanish Thrives In The US Despite An English-Only Drive](#)  
[Rabbis Protest Trump's Comments By Boycotting Conference Call](#)  
[Alaska's Permafrost Is Thawing](#)  
[Graphic: 'It's A Slow Death': The World's Worst Humanitarian Crisis](#)  
[Mastermind Or Naif? Samsung Heir's Fate Hinges On The Question](#)  
[How A Shadowy Imam Evaded Scrutiny And Forged The Barcelona Cell](#)

**Washington Post:**

[Trump-Congress Conflict Escalates](#)  
[Commander, Divider, Uniter: 3 Roles Of Trump](#)  
[Returning To Mosul's Old City, Where Homes Are Now Tombs](#)  
[Boxing's Long Tradition Still Stoking Racial Embers](#)  
[Unusually Similar Candidates In A Divided Va. House District](#)

**Financial Times:**

[Typhoon Hato Leaves 3 Dead In South China](#)  
[WPP Hit By Ad Spending Squeeze As Digital Disruption Gathers Pace](#)  
[Credit Default Swap Bundles Make A Comeback 10 Years After Financial Crisis](#)

**Washington Times:**

[Democrats Brand Trump As Reckless, Redouble Resist Vow After Shutdown Threat On Border Wall](#)

[Trump Blames Congress For Stalled Agenda, Urges Senate To Abolish Filibuster Rules](#)  
[Every U.S. County Except One Has Obamacare Options For 2018](#)  
[Ukraine Fighters Vow To Press On In Conflict Now In Its Fourth Year](#)  
[California Parents Feel 'Betrayed' By Transgender Reveal In Kindergarten Class](#)  
[Breathtaking Utah Monuments To Test Trump, Antiquities Act](#)

**Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Trump-Phoenix, Reno Speeches; Trump-McConnell Relationship; Severe Weather-Hurricane Watches; Cuba-Possible Sonic Attack; US Navy-Seventh Fleet Commander Dismissed; Opioid Epidemic-Chinese Fentanyl Shipments; Hillary Clinton-New Book; Charlottesville-Lee Statue Covered; Google, Walmart Partnership-Amazon Competition; Rotterdam Concert Canceled-Terror Threat.

**CBS:** Trump-Phoenix, Reno Speeches; Clapper-Trump Presidential Fitness; Trump Agenda-Analysis; Trump-Party Ties; Thea Lee-WH Advisory Committee Resignation; Hillary Clinton-New Book; US Navy-Seventh Fleet Commander Dismissed; Severe Weather-Hurricane Watches; Rotterdam Concert Canceled-Terror Threat; Health-Study Links Sleep, Dementia; Cuba-Possible Sonic Attack; Charlottesville-Lee Statue Covered; ESPN Announcer Robert Lee Reassigned Over Name.

**NBC:** Trump-Phoenix, Reno Speeches; Trump-McConnell Relationship; Charlottesville-Lee Statue Covered; Hillary Clinton-New Book; Severe Weather-Hurricane Watches; Google, Walmart Partnership-Amazon Competition; Opioid Epidemic-Chinese Fentanyl Shipments; Mar-a-Lago Resort-Charities Withdraw Fundraiser Events; Samsung-Galaxy Note 8.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Trump-Phoenix, Reno Speeches – 8 minutes, 15 seconds  
Hillary Clinton-New Book – 6 minutes, 45 seconds  
Opioid Epidemic-Chinese Fentanyl Shipments – 4 minutes, 20 seconds  
Google, Walmart Partnership-Amazon Competition – 3 minutes, 15 seconds  
Severe Weather-Hurricane Watches – 2 minutes, 45 seconds  
Cuba-Possible Sonic Attack – 2 minutes, 30 seconds  
US Navy-Seventh Fleet Commander Dismissed – 2 minutes, 10 seconds  
Charlottesville-Lee Statue Covered – 1 minute, 10 seconds  
Trump-McConnell Relationship – 1 minute  
Rotterdam Concert Canceled-Terror Threat – 40 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Lottery-Powerball Jackpot; Trump-Phoenix, Reno Speeches; Severe Weather-Hurricane Watches

**CBS:** Severe Weather-Hurricane Watches; Energy Department-Electrical Grid Warnings; Trump-Phoenix, Reno Speeches; Trump-McConnell Relationship; Pentagon-Transgender Ban; Lottery-Powerball Jackpot.

**FOX:** Trump-Phoenix, Reno Speeches; Trump-McConnell Relationship; South China-Deadly Typhoon; Lottery-Powerball Jackpot; Wall Street.

**NPR:** Trump-Phoenix, Reno Speeches; Charlottesville-Lee Statue Covered; North Korea-Rocket Engine, Warhead Production Orders; USS John S. McCain-Search Continues; Cambodia-Democratic Climate; Amazon-Whole Foods Market Acquisition; Google, Walmart Partnership-Account Competition.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

#### White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Receives his daily intelligence briefing; meets with the National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster; meets with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget Mick Mulvaney and the Office of Legislative Affairs.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Joins the President meet with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget Mick Mulvaney and the Office of Legislative Affairs; joins Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats to tour the National Counterterrorism Center and participate in a series of briefings.

**US Senate:** 1:00 PM Senate Judiciary subcommittee field hearing on the Ninth Circuit – Privacy, Technology and the Law Subcommittee hearing on 'Rebooting the Ninth Circuit: Why Technology Cannot Solve Its Problems' \* President Donald Trump has previously said he was considering splitting up the court – which some Republicans accuse of bias because a high proportion of its judges were appointed by Democratic presidents – after it blocked both his travel ban and his efforts to withhold funding from 'sanctuary cities.' Location: Sandra Day O'Connor United States Courthouse, 401 W Washington St, Phoenix, AZ <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>. Contacts: Senate Judiciary Committee press 1 202 224 7703.

1:00 PM Senate Small Business Committee field hearing on opportunities in Acadiana – Field hearing on 'Growing Opportunities for Businesses and Small Farmers in Acadiana', with testimony from Supreme Rice Vice President Bill Dore; Cajun Sugar Company General Manager Michael Comb; Faith Family Shrimp Company owner and operator Angela Portier; Louisiana Small Business Development Center Director Heidi Melancon; and Office of the Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Senior Advisor for Policy Joseph Laroski, Jr. Location: Youngsville City Hall, 305 Iberia St, Youngsville, LA <http://sbc.senate.gov/>. Contacts: Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship 1 202 224 5175.

**US House:** 11:30 AM GOP Rep. Rob Bishop discusses National Monument designation review – House Committee on Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop discusses the administration's review of National Monument designations and reforms to the Antiquities Act of 1906, via press conference call. Location: TBD <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>. Contacts: Parish Braden House Committee on Natural Resources [parish.braden@mail.house.gov](mailto:parish.braden@mail.house.gov) 1 202 226 9019 Katie Schoettler House Committee on Natural Resources [katie.schoettler@mail.house.gov](mailto:katie.schoettler@mail.house.gov). CALL: 1-800-857-5745 Passcode: MONUMENT \* To RSVP, please contact Katie Schoettler.

**Other:** No relevant events.

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Trevor Noah:** [Referencing Trump's Phoenix rally] "Seeing as Trump won Arizona, it's no surprise that last night's rally was packed. There was a line around the block like someone was releasing a racist sneaker."

**Trevor Noah:** [Referencing Trump's Phoenix rally] "Now, although most of Trump's rally was an outstanding rejection of sanity, there was a key issue that he had to address, and that was demanding justice for the real victim of Charlottesville – himself."

**Trevor Noah:** [Referencing Trump's Phoenix rally] "He sounds less like a president and more like an angry waiter arguing about an order he got wrong. 'I got you the neo-Nazi! I got you the fries. I got you the KKK! I got it all!'"

**Conan O'Brien:** "In her new book, Hillary Clinton calls Donald Trump – this is true – a creep who made her skin crawl. ... When he heard this, Trump smiled and said, 'I still got it.'"

**Conan O'Brien:** "Last night, President Trump spoke at a rally in Arizona. ... He opened his speech by saying, this is a quote, 'Our movement is a movement built on love.' Yeah. In other words, he started with his best joke."

**Conan O'Brien:** "At yesterday's Trump rally, the crowd was chanting 'CNN sucks.' ... And man, you do not want to hear what they had to say about the Science Channel. That was ugly."

**Conan O'Brien:** "It's being reported that President Trump is no longer speaking to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. ... On hearing this, Melania went to McConnell and said, 'Teach me, master.'"

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